

Projecting Future Coal Mining in Steep Terrain of Appalachia

Progress Report - June, 2000

Introduction

The workplan for this study was outlined by the Steering Committee for the Environment Impact Statement (EIS). The objective for this workplan is to assemble the information from all the available sources for surface mineable coal reserves in the Appalachia Coalfields.

Progress to Date

West Virginia

Surface mineable reserves in the report submitted by the West Virginia Geological Survey (WVGES) were compared with reserves provided by the mining company. It shows good correlation.

Surface mineable reserves estimated by Doug Brown, of the West Virginia Department of Environment Protection in the Spruce Fork and Island Creek water shed areas are being evaluated.

Virginia

Erik Westman from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University completed the outcrop and structure maps of all surface mineable coal seams and transferred the information into a Geographic Information System (GIS). Estimating the surface mineable reserves is complete. A meeting is scheduled on June 15 at Pittsburgh to review the project before it is finalized.

Kentucky

Jerry Weisenfluh from the Kentucky Geological Survey completed transferring the information on outcrop and the surface/deep mined-out areas into the GIS. The seam outcrop, structure contour, and the surface mineable reserves maps are being developed for two major coal seams (which contains 80-85 % of total reserves) and will be completed by July 31. A meeting is scheduled for June 16 at Lexington, KY. to review the first set of maps developed. The third coal seam which makes 15-20 % of reserves will be completed by September, 30.

Industry Information

Several mining companies were contacted again and requested to provide the surface mineable reserve information. None have responded.

Data Analysis

OSM continues comparing the maps submitted by the mining companies and Doug Brown with maps prepared by WVGES of the same area for correlation. The maps submitted by WVGES are global and the maps prepared by the mining companies are based on detailed information.

Once the information from all the states is received, OSM will estimate the volume of the spoil generated and the area and the number of fills by watershed.

First Draft

If all the information is received as planned, the first draft report will be ready by July 15, 2000

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